"The mighty dead
"Who blessed mankind and humanised the world."

THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN
AND
Record of Unitarian Worthies

BEING A HISTORY OF THE UNITARIAN REFORMATION OF RELIGION IN EUROPE AND AMERICA DURING THE LAST THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS.

With some Account of the most Notable Works written by Unitarians.

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THE GOOD MOTHER.

IN MEMORIAM.

"She was a queen in her own domain,
And love was her golden crown."

The remembrance of a good mother is unspeakably precious and immortal. We trust that all have the feeling there has been one at least who loved them for their sake alone. For ever dear to us is this certain knowledge, that o'er us, "she kept watch and ward; and all for love, and nothing for reward." The safest refuge in the hour of supposed danger, and the sweetest influence we were born to experience, was found in this good mother. Nothing set a barrier to her love. Sickness and misfortune but quickened those strong feelings of affection which bound her to her family. All the world might array themselves against her children, then she was more than all the world to them. Pursued by evil fortune or malignity,

"A mother was a mother still,
The holiest thing alive."

Mother was never weary of devising good or working out plans of usefulness for her family. Image of her Maker; incessant in goodness. While she lived it could be said of one on earth, as one in heaven—she will never leave us nor forsake us. She soothed the sorrows of her household, and was ever ready to suffer for their welfare. Willingly would she have received any blow aimed at her children. How sweet the memory of such a love,

"That like the ivy to the oak,
Clings closer in the storm."

Her piety clasped our little hands in hers, and bent our knees to God, and taught us to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven;" and is now like a living stream at which her children still refresh themselves, and will ever do so all the way to the house of many mansions. Nothing but Eternal Love, which is enthroned in the universe, made a mother's heart. Who can doubt the mercies of God when he thinks of his own mother, "made in the image of God," and is reminded by holy writ, "That a mother may forget her child, yet I will not forget thee."

For ever blest be her whose patience, toil, and love we celebrate. The morning woke her but to spend its primal hour for her family. All the day long her pleasure was in the routine of homely duty. Her home was a sacred temple, where she offered her sacrifices morning, noon, and night. Her own fireside was her kingdom, and love was her golden crown. Patiently she sat shaping so deftly some new garment for her children, or softly she moved anticipating all the wants of her household. There was to us a peculiar charm in all she did, because so graced with love. And when the day was done, and night came on, while the statesman was asleep, all forgetful of the cares of office, and while the miser remembered not his gold, and lovers were oblivious of each other, mother was still awake, and still engaged, hushing her child to sleep, or in some other way when all was at rest, ministering still to the wants of her family. No midnight cry ever came and found her unprepared, or with untrimmed lamp.

O sacred memory of unaffected piety, unbounded love, and unwearying endeavour! Never shall those holy deeds be erased from our remembrance; never shall that persistent faithfulness and self-denial be forgotten. And wherever we may hereafter hear the soft voice that bespeaks the warm heart, or in any form see the evidence of great parental love, or womanly gracefulness and fidelity, in all these scenes we shall recognise the best monument of our good mother.

This Outside Cover to be taken Off by the Binder of the "Record."

"THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY."

MANY years ago three fair travellers were standing in harmonious communication on a toilsome and rugged road, over much of which they had steadily and courageously passed.

One had a firm, grave aspect, and his eye never rested on the ground, but was fixed on heaven, as if reading there the certainty of a prosperous journey; but when clouds came over the clear ether, he was saddened and complained. The second looked radiant with the emotions that filled his heart; a smile of satisfaction and triumph played on his lips, and he ardently gazed on the end of the weary path before him; but sometimes a mist would rise and obscure the end, and then he would grow faint and seem ready to die. The third looked upward and onward and around with serene delight, and neither the clouds above, nor the mists beyond, nor the roughness of the way offended her; she had still a sweet song of praise in her heart which nothing could silence, a quiet joy that nothing could interrupt.

But they communed as they rested by the way, and a pilgrim drew near to them.

"Do you know me, friend?" asked the first, resting on his staff and pointing heaven-ward.

"How had I got so far if I had not known you'" asked the pilgrim. "Have you not taught me where to look for direction, and strength, and a clear understanding of the way, its troubles and its end, of the rest beyond, and how to obtain it?"

"Good!" replied the first.

"And you know me?" asked the second.

"Know you?" said the pilgrim. "Well may I know you; haven't you lightened my feet so that I am able sometimes to run where I might expect to halt, and haven't you made me go headlong through hindrances without looking at them, and suffer loss and pain too without caring for them, by bringing the good things I am travelling to right before my eyes, so that I am ready to laugh at the good and bad of the way?"

"And you know me?" asked the third.

"If I know you not, I know nothing," said the pilgrim; "you are the very sun of my life everywhere; within and without you are my solace and my joy; while I look upward for direction you smile on me from heaven; when I look onward for my reward, it is you that make the prospect so gratifying; when you reign in my heart perfect peace is there."

"Oh, happy pilgrim!" cried the travellers, "journey on with us."

"And I will ever lift up your head," said Faith.

"And I will give you strength to leap over the wall," said Hope, "by showing you what lies behind it."

"And I—I will go with you into heaven, and when there you will say you never knew how fair and excellent I was till you beheld me in my native place."

Thus spoke Love, and the pilgrim saw that it was true; and as he walked with the three he clung closest to Love, and I saw that the nearer he kept to her the more steadily did Faith direct him, and the more confidently did he rejoice in Hope.

HYMN FOR A LITTLE CHILD.

GOD make my life a little light,
Within the world to glow;
A little flame that burneth bright,
Wherever it may go.

God make my life a little flower,
That giveth joy to all,
Content to bloom in native bower,
Although its place be small.

God make my life a little song,
That comforteth the sad;
That helpeth others to be strong,
And makes the singer glad.

God make my life a little staff,
Whereon the weak may rest,
That so what health and strength I have
May serve my neighbour best.

God make my life a little hymn
Of tenderness and praise,
Of faith—that never waxeth dim,
In all his wondrous ways.

DIFFERENT PATHS.

I LATELY talked with one who strove
To show that all my way was dim,
That his alone—the road to heaven;
And thus it was I answered him:—

"Strike not away the staff I hold,
You cannot give me yours, dear friend;
Up the steep hill our paths are set
In different ways, to one sure end.

"What though, with eagle glance upfixed
On heights beyond our mortal ken,
You tread the broad sure stones of Faith
More firmly than do weaker men:

"To each according to his strength;
But as we leave the plains below,
Let us carve out a wider stair,
And broader pathway thro' the snow.

"We shall perceive that tho' our steps
Have wandered wide apart, dear friend,
No pathway can be wholly wrong
That tends unto one perfect end."

JOHANNA SEBUS.

THE poet Goethe tells a sad and beautiful story—and it is the more sad and beautiful because it is true—of a young girl, Johanna Sebus, who, in the year 1809, when the sea broke down the dykes and overflowed her native village, proved herself worthy of a great poet's song.

Johanna, or Joanna, as we would call her, was only seventeen years old, but no one in the village had the noble spirit and quiet courage of this strong, true-hearted girl.

When the waters rose around the houses, and the waves washed up to the very doorsteps, Johanna knew that there was no longer safety, excepting on the high grounds near the village. But how were they to reach those high grounds? The water was nearly knee-deep and rising every moment. The roaring and surging of the waves and the wind was heard in every direction, and the dyke was giving way, piece by piece, before the rushing flood. Every moment the danger increased. There was no time to hesitate.

Johanna's mother, an aged woman, could not force her way through those raging waves. But Johanna was tall and strong. She took her old mother in her arms and stepped boldly into the water. The waves dashed against her, but she pressed on. Her neighbours, and three children, seeing her leave them, were seized with a sudden terror. Not until this moment did they know how much they depended on the brave Johanna, the only person to whom they could look for counsel or help in this hour of peril.

After a word or two of encouragement to her mother, who trembled as she saw the waters boiling beneath her—so terribly near to her—Johanna turned to her neighbours and called to them to fly to the hill close by, which was yet dry, and would afford them safety for a time, and assured them that she would return to them as soon as she had placed her mother on the high ground. "And my poor goat," she cried, as she heard her favourite bleating after her; "take him with you. Don't leave him to die."

As soon as she reached a place of safety, Johanna set her mother upon the ground, and, without a moment's pause, turned around to hurry back through the ever-deepening water. Her old mother cried out:

"Oh! where are you going? The path is washed away! Oh, my daughter! will you go into that dreadful flood again?"

"Mother, they must be saved!" said Johanna, as she plunged into the water, by this time more than knee-deep.

The dyke was now on the point of giving way entirely. A hill of water seemed roaring and foaming towards the village.

But Johanna pressed on over the path which she knew so well, although it was now covered with water. The waves dashed against her, almost knocking her down, and drenching her from head to foot. At last she reached the little hill where she had left her neighbours. But almost at this moment the dyke gave way; a mad deluge rushed in, sweeping everything before it, and around the little hill soon boiled a turbulent sea, rising above its highest point.

As the great waves roll over the ground on which they stand, clinging in terror to each other, Johanna's poor neighbour and her children cannot keep their foothold. They are washed away, and disappear beneath the raging flood. As they sink, one of the children seizes the goat by one horn, and drags him down. Thus all but Johanna are lost.

Johanna stands alone still firm and strong, but the waters are rising and rising around her.

Who is there now to save this noble girl? She has many friends and many lovers, but no one of them comes to her now. Nothing comes to her but the salt angry waves. Nowhere can she see even a boat.

She casts one look up to heaven, and then the waters surge fiercely against her, and she is gone!

Now nothing is to be seen where the village stood but a wild waste of waters, with here and there a steeple or a tree rising up above the flood.

But as the survivors gaze upon the wide-spread desolation, the thought of the brave and beautiful girl who gave her life for others throws a deeper gloom upon the mournful scene.

And even when the waters subside and the land reappears, no one who knew Johanna can be glad. They weep for her and cannot forget her.

This is a sad story of a noble girl. Only those who have read it as Goethe so tenderly and dramatically tells it in his poem, Johanna Sebus, can appreciate its true pathos and force.

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

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Making their Mark.—Lord Chief Justice Cockburn alluded lately in his speech on the Tichborne case to the use of marks in signatures. The subject is a curious one. In Spain, until very recently, if not at the present time, the "mark" is of more importance than the name. Thus a banker would cash a check if it bore the mark without the signature, but not if it bore the signature alone. Some of these marks, which are usually modifications of the figure of the cross, more or less floriated, are very interesting, partaking of the nature of a branch of heraldry. They occur in a majority of Peninsular documents and deeds of any importance.

Bless the Woman.—A recent writer says, since Prof. Agassiz's death:—"What the professor lacked in order, method, or business habits, was abundantly supplied by Mrs. Agassiz. It was her graceful and assiduous pen that recast and put into more classic moulds the professor's ready English. It was her constant encouragement and stimulus that supported the professor in new and difficult undertakings. Her counsel was always listened to with respect. It is safe to say that we should not have had so many of his works put in a permanent form in English if it had not been for her earnest co-operation. The professor, as all know, was a ready lecturer, and always delivered his addresses without manuscript. In all of his lectures and speeches near home, Mrs. Agassiz accompanied him wherever possible, and took copious notes, and thus preserved the thought for future use."—*Advocate.*

Hastening to Rome.—There is certainly now a very spurious kind of Protestantism among many Protestant churches. Think of a scene in a High Church in Passion Week. We copy from the *Church Journal*:—"In Passion Week, a number of people were interested at the sight of several 'ministers' travelling the church on their knees, and solemnly pausing and praying before coarse chromos hung at various intervals on the walls—the stations of the Cross." The *Protestantism* represented by these "ministers" is that form which finds its most congenial exercise in protesting against the burial of men like Dr. Livingstone in places of honour and the burial of unbaptised infants in "consecrated" ground. It is mainly a thing of millinery and claptrap. And of another it is advertised, "Prayer for the Holy Dead will be said and the Blessed Sacrament administered to-morrow (Thursday) morning at eight o'clock."

The Growth of a Sect.—The rapidity with which a sect grows is no evidence that it has the truth; nor is slowness of growth a sign that truth is wanting. If so, Methodism, rather Catholicism, would have a favourable verdict, and Universalism, Unitarianism, and Swedenborgianism an unfavourable one. In fact, Spiritualism would, on that test, have precedence. Says the Unitarian Rev. M. K. Schermerhorn: "Other things being equal, our slow growth is rather our glory than our shame. We are carving marble and painting frescoes for eternity, and we don't expect to get along as if we were only turning out cast iron statues and wood-cut engravings. We are tunnelling the mountains of eternal truth, and we don't expect to do it as a cobbler punches a hole through his leather, in a moment. We are planting the oak of centuries; nay, the cedar of a thousand years; nay, as we think, the tree of life itself, and we don't expect it to grow like a hot-house plant, or to come to perfection, like the artist's tree of paint or wax, in a few days."

Roman Catholic Arrogance.—The London *Freeman* tells a story of a respected Nonconformist minister and two ladies who recently met in a bookstore in Littlehampton, Sussex. The minister thinking he recognised the ladies as attendants at his chapel, spoke to them in a kindly manner. The ladies did not, however, recognise him, and on saying so, elicited the explanation that he thought he was addressing ladies he had seen on several occasions at the Congregational Church. "Congregational Church, indeed!" exclaimed the senior of the two, with a look of holy horror which would have gladdened the heart of Pius IX. could he have witnessed it; "we know no church sir, but the catholic!" The ladies were very near relatives of the late Bishop of Winchester.

Amusing Answers.—Dean Ramsay, in his "Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character," tells the following: "The answer of the old woman under examination by the minister to the question from the Shorter Catechism, 'What are the decrees of God?' could not have been surpassed by the General Assembly of the Kirk, or even the Synod of Dort—'Indeed, sir, He kens that best himself.'" We have an answer analogous to that, though not so pungent, in a catechumen of the late Dr. Johnstone, of Leith. She answered his own question, patting him on the shoulder, "Deed, just tell it yersel, bonny doctor (he was a very handsome man); naebody can tell it better." The above reminds us of an answer once given by a very little child to the village schoolmaster who was in his most kind way asking his little pupil to tell him how to spell a word. "Oh, Matthew, thou knows very well without asking me how to spell that word."

Origin of Trinitarianism.—The author of the book "The Morning Land" avers the doctrine of the Trinity to hail from Egypt, not from Palestine. In ancient Osirianism, as in modern Christianism, the Godhead is conceived as a Trinity, yet are the three gods declared to be only one God. In ancient Osirianism, as in modern Christianism, we find the worship of a Divine Mother and Child. In Ancient Osirianism, as in modern Christianism, there is a doctrine of atonement. In ancient Osirianism, as in modern Christianism, we find the vision of a last judgment and resurrection of the body. And finally, in ancient Osirianism, as in modern Christianism, the sanctions of morality are a lake of fire and tormenting demons on the one hand, and on the other eternal life in the presence of God. Is it possible, then, that such similarities of doctrine should not raise the most serious questions as to the relations of the beliefs about Christ to those about Osiris; as to the cause of this wonderful similarity of the doctrines of Christianism to those of Osirianism; nay, as to the possibility of the whole doctrinal system of modern orthodoxy being but a transformation of the Osiris myth?

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